

State of the City – February 21, 2009

Thank you for that kind introduction, Ms. DeHaan. Our city is strengthened by your generosity and leadership on the crucial issue of our children's education.

The Christel House Academy charter school reflects the hope we all place in our children. It is for **them**, and **their** future, that we work hard every day to be good citizens and make the right decisions for Indianapolis.

To all elected officials, and their families; to all who came today out of a sense of identity to Indianapolis; to the choir and the students and their parents, I say thank you for being here. I especially want to acknowledge Council President Bob Cockrum and Minority Leader Joanne Sanders.

And, as always, thank you to my wife Winnie and my family. Being Mayor entails long hours and heavy responsibility, and I am so very fortunate to have the support of the people I love most.

The State of Our City is strong, but we are not immune to challenges and the financial and economic crisis gripping our nation.

Just over a year ago, I took the oath of office as your Mayor. It was a proud moment for my family and me. I took the oath knowing our city faced real and serious challenges. This past year has only reinforced this belief.

Indianapolis is on the cusp of a potential fiscal and infrastructure crisis unlike any in our lifetime.

For too long the basics have been ignored. We attempted to mortgage our children's future while forgetting that those bills always come due.

The \$36 million deficit at the Capital Improvements Board may grab the headlines, but challenges we face go beyond the headlines, and impact our citizens every day and in every paycheck.

Our facilities are best in class, but they've come at a high price.

Placing blame for this immense problem is not important, but fixing the problem is. We are working with Governor Daniels and the General Assembly on solutions—solutions that directly involve the users of these facilities and those who benefit from them.

The state of our roads and bridges is nowhere near acceptable, our city's infrastructure is crumbling, and we are paying millions of dollars in interest on short-sighted deals that adversely affect our budget.

Even the euphoria over the opening of Lucas Oil Stadium died down quickly when it was realized that we lacked the money to keep the lights on and its workers employed.

Whether it was negligence when it came to repairing our roads or putting off fleet purchases so that repairs now cost more than the worth of the vehicle, decisions have been made without the best interests of the taxpayer in mind.

We must tell the truth when we talk to our fellow citizens. Balancing the budget will be very difficult this year while the economic downturn is affecting the bottom line of everyone—including Indianapolis.

More than at any other time in our city's history, we must work together to creatively meet these great challenges.

To emerge stronger from these difficult times, we must rely upon the goodwill of the citizens, the inherent sense of purpose and pride we all feel as members of the Indianapolis community.

Indianapolis is stronger because of the spirit of its citizens. These are the people we pass every day on the sidewalks or see dropping their kids off at school...the men and women on the job in big corporations and small businesses, and the public servants who are there when you need them...the senior citizens who have been a part of our city's transformation, and the young adults who are just beginning to make their mark.

We must rely on the wisdom of our elected officials in the General Assembly and the City-County Council, the sage advice of those who came before us, and the common sense of the people we serve.

But these challenges, while real and difficult, are not insurmountable. We faced tough times as a city before...we've overcome them...and emerged stronger.

Even with our challenges, Indianapolis is strong and vibrant.

With an eye on the future, we are working now to make Indianapolis America's Most Livable Big City – **a community that is safe, prosperous, a coveted destination for the best and the brightest, and a sustainable landmark with strong neighborhoods and efficient local government.**

[Pause]

We prosper and persevere in this city because we don't know how to do otherwise. In the past year, I have appealed on more than one occasion to this invincible sense of purpose, and you have delivered:

- We brought veterans together and families to tears with our Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Event at the Indiana War Memorial.
- Our collection boxes for the homeless address the problems of panhandling for businesses and citizens on our streets, but they also make sure contributions go to the homeless people in our community who really need our help.
- You led the way in our city-wide food initiative as we have received thousands of pounds of food and commitments of over \$100,000 to date.

And we've had our share of events and wins that directly affect our civic pride:

- We opened Lucas Oil Stadium, the new Indianapolis International Airport, and finalized the JW Marriott Hotel tower project.
- And, there's this event known as Super Bowl 46

[Pause]

My Administration is working hard every day to deliver on our promise of making Indianapolis the most livable big city in America.

Today, I want to describe what it means for Indianapolis to be the most livable big city in America, and what we're doing to achieve that goal.

Now, livability means many different things. What I mean is making Indianapolis a place where people feel comfortable and proud to live and to work, to raise a family and to operate a business.

Livability means using every resource possible to fight crime to make our neighborhoods secure and keep people safe.

It means reinvesting in our neighborhoods to make them what they need to be—the real treasures of our city.

It means making Indianapolis attractive to business by offering them an educated workforce and a prosperous economic climate.

It means expanding the opportunities for our children to have the best education possible.

It means enhancing our environment by embracing the new technologies that will make our city more green, more sustainable.

It means looking first at ourselves in city government to deliver services more efficiently and to be faithful stewards of the taxpayers' money. And I promise my administration will never forget that it is **your** money.

And, last but certainly not least, it means reforming government to bring it in line with 21st-century realities and technology.

This speech is by no means the start of our efforts to increase the livability of our city; rather, it is an opportunity for me to review what we started to do from day one.

[Pause]

We started our crusade against crime by putting in place a leader known and respected by everyone—and that's Scott Newman as director of public safety.

His team of men and women were chosen for three simple reasons—because they have the experience, the expertise, and the commitment to make this community a safer place to live.

Perhaps one or two of you have heard me say that public safety is job one. I said it the first day I knocked on doors as a candidate, and it will be the last thing I say when I leave office.

Because public safety is job one, we worked with the City-County Council and the sheriff to bring the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department under the direction of the Mayor's office.

When choosing a place to live and raise a family, is there a higher consideration than, will I feel safe?

Our public safety efforts are dedicated to making the answer to that question "yes" regardless of where you live in Marion County.

And nobody personifies the dedication of all law enforcement officers in Marion County better than Officer Jason Fishburn who is with us here this morning.

(((Ask Officer Fishburn to please stand)))

[Pause]

Jason, we honor your commitment to serving your fellow citizens and your unquestioned bravery in defense of us all.

We are bringing back community policing—where police officers and neighborhoods work together to keep everyone safer, and we are empowering our officers to make a real and responsible connection to their patrols and the people who live in them.

This year our goal is to hire 36 Public Assistance Officers. These officers will be out in the neighborhoods, but will focus on administrative matters thus freeing police officers to work their beat more.

We are also increasing the number of people we hire this year as full-time, sworn officers with larger classes later this year at the academy.

We are committed to providing our law enforcement professionals the tools they need to get the job done. Our stimulus package request includes two million dollars for the latest in crime fighting technology. Including Shot-Spotters which can instantly photograph an area where gun shots are fired.

While the number of homicides in 2008 was up slightly over the previous year, IMPD is currently running a clearance rate above 100% -- solving every homicide so far in 2009 plus several unsolved cases from last year. In other categories, violent crime is actually going down:

- Rape is down over 9 percent.
- Auto theft is down over 13 percent.
- Robbery is down nearly 4 percent.
- And we have even become a model for other police departments in the United States and the subject of two national television shows.

A second result of our strategy is that the morale of the officers serving our community is outstanding.

- In 2008, the number of officers calling in sick on a typical weekend dropped from 45 to 8.
- Self-initiated enforcement activity, where an officer isn't sent on a run, but rather uses his training and intuitive knowledge of his beat, is up 25 percent, but citizens' complaints are down 8 percent from 2007.

- And, by a 3-1 margin, our public safety officers state they feel supported in their job and have high morale.

And my morale will go up when people in every neighborhood can walk around at night with their friends and family and feel safe.

Last year's decline in violent crime is encouraging, but we absolutely are ***not*** satisfied. In just the first two months of this year we have added considerably to our public safety efforts.

This January, I was pleased to announce the Community Crime Prevention Grants—money that will go directly to organizations fighting the good fight at the grass roots, neighborhood level.

Organizations from across the county will receive nearly \$4.5 million in grants for 50 community initiatives ranging from health to mentoring to education, selected by a mayoral commission.

I talked to them directly, telling them that their purpose is to reduce and prevent violent crime in our city. I made it clear that our public safety efforts begin with preventing crime at the community level.

We are indebted to the dedication and courage of all neighborhood groups as they continue their efforts to make Indianapolis safer.

[Pause]

And as proud as people are of their city, they live in their neighborhoods. A livable city requires great neighborhoods.

Since the day we took office, we have emphasized a deeper, closer, and more productive relationship with the city's tremendous neighborhood organizations.

One of the first decisions I made after winning the Mayor's race in 2007 was to appoint Olgen Williams as deputy mayor of neighborhoods. His record as a neighborhood advocate speaks for itself, and many of you know him for his selfless work at the Christamore House.

We also started our ambitious monthly "Mayor's Night Out" program. I take the top leadership of city government, and we visit neighborhoods throughout Marion County. We bring city government to you—to listen to your thoughts and concerns.

In fact, please join us this coming Tuesday at the IPS Center for Inquiry located downtown. Or March 3rd in Decatur Township.

This is your government, and your voice deserves an opportunity to be heard.

And we've invested heavily in our neighborhoods, and more is on the way.

In addition to the Community Crime Prevention Grants, which I mentioned earlier, these neighborhood investments include the distribution of over \$29 million in funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

This money will allow us to redevelop neighborhoods and rescue them before they turn into blighted areas, riddled with crime and immune to economic development efforts.

[Pause]

A third quality of our livable city is economic energy and opportunity, an environment where companies want to build or expand.

We all read the news about the economy, and it's discouraging. National and international trends are against us, but we are working hard to attract and retain jobs.

During our first year in office, our economic development policies resulted in the commitment of over \$200 million in additional or retained payroll.

My administration has allocated a million dollars in community development grants to help spur economic development. Our economic development plan includes fostering public-private partnerships—with local companies like Exact Target—while protecting Indianapolis taxpayers by judicious use of tax abatements and TIF districts.

By using a combination of revolving loans and development grants, we were able to assist companies wanting to come here, resulting in commitments to create or retain 10,000 jobs with an average wage over \$17 an hour. In 2008, we were able to secure over \$330 million in capital investment commitments for Indianapolis.

And just a few weeks ago I joined with Governor Mitch Daniels to announce the move of Streetlinks National Appraisal Services to Marion County, bringing over \$1 million in investment and a pledge to create over 300 jobs in the next few years.

In today's economy, where people are worried about paying their mortgage and putting food on the table, commitments from companies like Streetlinks are just what our city and its workers need.

And how do we secure these commitments? By working harder, working smarter, and showcasing the advantages Indianapolis has to offer.

In fact, Indianapolis Economic Development, Inc., under the direction of its CEO Scott Miller, is creating an economic development organization focused on three core objectives:

- one, creating an environment that is favorable to job retention and growth,

- two, attracting the “highest and best” jobs to Indianapolis by targeting high-growth industries and international business,
- and three, collaborating with the Indianapolis Private Industry Council to strategically prepare our workforce for these new jobs. We can’t have higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs unless we have a workforce that is properly trained and prepared to take these jobs.

I believe to accomplish these goals, IEDI and IPIC must align their efforts and forge ahead in a strategic, coordinated way to ensure Indianapolis remains competitive.

Therefore, I have asked the leaders of both organizations to consider this opportunity and make a recommendation to me as to how they can establish a closer working relationship.

We must be positioned to win new jobs, especially as the competition for jobs heats up like never before.

We must be international in outlook and vision. We simply won’t be competitive in the next half century unless we embrace and attract international business and export our own products overseas.

We traveled to Asia earlier this year to strengthen the economic ties between our city and cities in China. Our office of International and Cultural Affairs, led by Carolin Requiz-Smith and assisted by the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership, is reaching out across the world to make sure everyone knows Indianapolis is a destination city for business and education.

We are committed to helping minority- and women-owned businesses get started and prosper. We also added “veterans owned” businesses to our list of enterprises that can benefit from special attention.

[Pause]

Of course, to attract companies, we have to offer them more than economic incentives or easy access to an interstate or an airport.

We need an educated workforce.

Obviously, there are challenges in our education system. To overcome those challenges requires effort and the participation of all involved—teachers, students, and parents.

I am in the process of going to every high school in the city, and visiting the other schools as I can. Our schools I’ve visited are filled with bright students, conscientious teachers, and an atmosphere of growth.

Education still remains the best hope for anyone to move out of poverty to a successful, bright future.

A real bright spot in Indianapolis education is the Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools, which stand out for the sheer magnitude of the difference they make. We are all here, at the Christel House Academy, as a tribute to the innovation and discipline instilled by the faculty and founder alike.

The question we must ask ourselves is, why would we limit opportunities—especially for families in the urban core of the city who can't afford private schools and are hungry for options that best meet their needs?

And the answer is, we won't limit opportunities for our children..

We were very fortunate when former Lt. Governor John Mutz agreed to head our charter school board. John has served the people of Indiana with distinction. His leadership, along with that of our director Karega Rausch and his superb staff, is a testament to the power of education and the type of people it attracts.

And no mention of charter schools would be complete without giving credit to former Mayor Bart Peterson and his efforts to increase educational choices for families in Indianapolis.

By measuring achievement over time, charter schools provide a clearer record of progress and improvement for students.

Even though our charter schools comprise only 7 percent of all public schools in Indianapolis, they comprise 30 percent of the top 10 most improved schools in terms of ISTEP+ improvement.

In the past few months we've increased our effort to get the word out to parents about the education choice represented by charter schools. Just last week we sponsored a very successful Charter School Community Fair at the Artsgarden...one of the attendees was State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett, and I'd like to acknowledge his presence in the audience here today.

Civic leaders throughout the Hoosier State have a true partner for education in Dr. Bennett.

The purpose of the Fair was to provide a marketplace of ideas and opportunities for parents who are desperately looking for education choices.

And they certainly are looking—in fact there are over 700 families on our waiting list.

Why are they willing to wait?

- Because 87 percent of parents and 89 percent of staff reported overall satisfaction with Mayor-sponsored charter schools.
- They are willing to wait because 94 percent of Mayor-sponsored charter school graduates enroll in a two-year or four-year-college.
- And because they realize charter schools are saving the lives of their students by teaching them the key to a successful future is success in the classroom.

What charter schools offer students and parents more than anything else is accountability. By measuring achievement over time, charter schools provide a clearer record of progress and improvement for students.

We hold our institutions and instructors at the Mayor-sponsored Charter Schools to the highest standard possible because that is what we should demand of all our learning institutions as a society.

[Pause]

Another quality of a livable city is an environment that's healthy and enjoyable, and I truly believe we are making a difference because of our Office of Sustainability.

As a city, we were woefully behind in the implementation of new, sustainable technologies and initiatives that will make Indianapolis a cleaner city while realizing real cost savings to our citizens.

I have made it a priority to catch up in this vital area and then to make Indianapolis the most sustainable city in the Midwest.

My vision for Indianapolis includes the kind of open-minded, 21st-century thinking that is embodied by green building and sustainability. In 2008, we created the

first-ever Office of Sustainability so we could promote and coordinate our environmental initiatives. What have we done?

- We began construction of Indianapolis' first on-street bike lanes.
- We purchased hybrid vehicles for our public safety fleet with an estimated savings of over \$100,000 over the life of the cars.
- In a pilot program, we placed 10 recycle bins along Massachusetts Avenue for pedestrian use.
- We turned recycled Christmas trees into mulch to be used at our parks—saving the taxpayers thousands of dollars.
- And, to encourage a profitable public-private partnership and educate others, we created the SustainIndy fund and SustainIndy.org.

We are saving taxpayer money by performing energy retrofits on city-owned buildings and using a pilot project to naturally filter storm water before it flows into Fall Creek. This will lead to cost savings in the long run and help avoid the sewer overflows that plague neighborhoods along the Fall Creek corridor.

We are using these new tools available to reduce costs in providing government goods and services while contributing to a healthy environment. Our Office of Sustainability and its director Karen Haley are making remarkable progress on both fronts.

And it also means working with generous benefactors who see the potential for good that our SustainIndy initiative can do. Earlier this year, the McKinney Family Foundation awarded the city a substantial grant to be used to drive local sustainability projects.

There are members of the McKinney family in attendance today—please stand up so we can recognize your commitment to Indianapolis.

[Pause]

As we seek to enhance the livability of our city, we must look at ourselves as a government. The quality of life of our city is diminished if local government wastes money and cannot provide basic services in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

Our Parks Department is meeting its challenges head-on under the innovative leadership of Stuart Lowry. The great work of his department touches all of us.

Whether it is the completion of the Fall Creek Trail, the groundbreaking of the Pennsy Trail, or just the everyday smiles that are created by the caring staff of Indy Parks, we are leaving our mark.

The Parks Department is also home to one of the more inspiring stories.

The Brookside Park Family Center was in dire need of attention and the Citizens Energy Group decided to take action. After countless donated hours, tireless effort and a gift of \$50,000, the Center is now active and vibrant and a real treasure in this eastside neighborhood.

Many people put a lot of work into the Brookside Park Family Center, but please allow me to recognize someone here today, Jan Diggins, for her immense contributions.

(((Ask Jan to please stand)))

[Pause]

We must be faithful stewards of the taxpayers' money and, at the same time, make Indianapolis more affordable.

- We made the budget process transparent and detailed for public viewing.

- We initiated the first-ever regional procurement consortium with fellow Mayors from Central Indiana to increase our purchasing power and save taxpayer money.
- We introduced the IndyStat program with a goal of improving operational management of the city-county agencies and departments.
- We utilized Six Sigma methods to determine the causes of defects and errors in how we conduct the government's business. Six Sigma is making a positive difference in our customer service at the Mayor's Action Center—especially in pothole response times.
- We've created an Office of Code Enforcement to streamline the city's licensing, permitting, inspections, and abatement functions into one entity.

There has been a tremendous change in the Indianapolis Bond Bank under director, Kevin Taylor.

By improving the Bond Bank's operational and accounting practices, we are realizing \$1.2 million in annual savings for taxpayers. Our diligence also resulted in an upgrade in our bond rating, which translates into more savings through lower interest costs.

Through the leadership of our corporation counsel, Chris Cotterill, we've saved \$4 million in legal fees in 2008 over what was spent in 2007.

We've taken these savings and invested them in areas that directly affect citizens and their quality of life.

For example, the Mayor's Action Center is one of our administration's greatest success stories. Sarah Taylor and her team are making caring and responsive customer

service their first priority. With an abandoned call rate under two percent for the last two months, the MAC is now a trusted way by which citizens can connect with their government.

We tackled immense budgetary issues last year and will do the same in 2009.

Last year we passed the first honestly-balanced budget in half a decade. We did it by tying spending to the collection of revenues and not spending down fund balances. In what was a tremendous victory for Marion County taxpayers, we secured \$65 million in funding annually from the General Assembly for public safety pensions and care for the indigent.

[Pause]

Let me be clear, again, and state plainly that we face what threatens to become a budget crisis this year.

Now, I've supported hard caps on property taxes from day one—and I still do. People have a right to expect a predictable tax bill every year.

But the impact on government of these hard caps will be substantial. We will have to examine every area of public services to find a way to deliver a balanced budget this year.

Livability means nothing if people can't *afford* to live here. We can look around to other cities throughout the Midwest and see cities that are becoming less and less affordable and less and less livable.

Although I will always compare our city favorably to other places in this great country, there is one area where drastic improvement is needed and long overdue.

I'm talking about the outdated, rusty antique known as township government.

Governor Daniels had it right when he declared that a visitor from the 1850s would recognize very little about his native Indiana, but would instantly recognize the way we govern ourselves. What is the value to taxpayers in clinging to a form of government that reflects neither modern technology nor modern realities?

Last month I had the opportunity to speak before the Indianapolis Rotary Club to outline our proposal for local government reform—a plan we call Unigov 2.0. Much of our progress in the past four decades began with the city-county reforms led by then-Mayor Richard Lugar, and now it's time to take the next step.

Just last week, I spoke in front of Indiana senators to detail why government reform is so important to the taxpayers of Marion County.

The Kernan-Shepard Commission did a superb job in explaining the need for eliminating duplicative layers of government. We have over 100 elected officials in Marion County, and that is simply too many.

Let's streamline services and deliver them more efficiently and with less cost to the taxpayer. Let's merge the remaining township fire departments into one cohesive, effective unit and the result will be better training, better response times, and better emergency medical service.

Last November voters by a 2-1 margin decided to end the 150-year tenure of the township assessors. In a bold move, voters across Marion County decided to continue the reform movement begun by Mayor Lugar and revived by Mayor Peterson.

We worked hard to make that happen and our people have spoken. They get it! Let's have true government reform, and let's move Marion County government into the 21st-century.

And let's never forget that city government *is* local government.

[Pause]

Please allow me to make one last point about our stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Yes, the city government is facing a tough budget year—but we've got to remember, so is everybody else.

We must not – and I will not – make fiscal decisions without considering the tax burden currently borne by the citizens of this great city.

One of the things I was most proud of in 2008 was our decision to reduce the tax burden of Marion County taxpayers by almost \$6 million for each of the next three years.

When we have an opportunity that allows people to keep their hard-earned dollars, we must make every effort to take advantage of that opportunity.

And we must all look out for the folks who are hurt most by the economic crisis.

In Indianapolis, we respect hard work, but we're willing to give a hand to people who need it. Churches and community organizations across the city are responding to these needs, and we in city government can support these efforts.

As an example, our ex-offender initiative helps to reduce habitual crime and make our streets safer, but it also gives a second chance to people at a time they need it most. Over 100 ex-offenders received employment as a result of our job fair in 2008 – including more than 25 people who are now working for the City.

Ultimately, we want Indianapolis to be a good place to live for **everyone**.

[Pause]

I've spent some time outlining some of the tough challenges we face as a city, but the question is, what are we doing to solve them?

We are making decisions based on doing the right thing for Indianapolis for next 30, 40, or 50 years. We cannot succumb to the temptation of the quick fix or leave the large, looming issues to the next Mayor.

We've asked for over \$160 million in money in the federal stimulus package that is directly related to our infrastructure needs, but remember that this is a one-time financial event.

Our Department of Public Works is working hard to keep up with the day-to-day maintenance, and we've ordered over \$18 million worth of new street equipment and snow removal vehicles.

But we need to think beyond the day-to-day and plan for the needs of the next generation of citizens.

This is why I have reached out to some of the most creative strategic and business minds in Indianapolis to create an Infrastructure Advisory Commission. You will hear more about this group in the coming weeks.

The city is very fortunate that Professor Bill Blomquist, the Dean of the IUPUI School of Liberal Arts, has agreed to chair this group, which will identify and review a wide range of creative solutions to fund our most critical infrastructure needs.

The group will review ideas including the following:

- Creative alternatives to generate millions of dollars in water and sewer ratepayer savings through increasing efficiencies; sharing services between municipal utilities like construction, fleet, and meter reading; and finding significant savings on construction through value engineering.

- Initiatives to generate significant increases in revenues from City parking meters, parking garages, and parking lots.
- Ideas to leverage increased value from City-owned assets, including buildings and real estate, through sponsorships, naming rights deals, and other revenue-generating alternatives.
- Ideas to significantly upgrade the City's Parks infrastructure, whose current capital needs are an estimated \$50 million, through higher and better use of parks facilities, foundation dollars, and partnerships with private and community organizations.

Additionally, we are using a comprehensive approach to the question of mass transit in Indianapolis. A lot of smart, thoughtful people have weighed in on this issue. While their work has been good, we need a regional roadmap that gives us direction towards a feasible and affordable mass transit system.

That's why I formed a committee, headed by Al Hubbard, John Neighbours, and Bob Palmer, to study and report—in six months—on what we can afford as a city and a region when it comes to mass transit, and what makes sense given our economic base and our geography.

[Pause]

That is what it will take, and what we're doing, to make Indianapolis the most livable big city in America.

- Livability means safety in streets.
- And it means strengthening neighborhoods throughout the city.
- It means economic opportunity from a strong business climate.

- And it means good schools for our children to prepare them for full lives.
- Livability means a sustainable and healthy environment.
- And, finally, it means a city and a government that's affordable and efficient – and organized for the 21st Century.

I believe that Indianapolis can offer the energy and excitement, diversity and opportunity, that only a big city can have, but it can also be a city where you don't need to be rich to live well.

What makes life good is a combination of ordinary things – safe neighborhoods, good schools, efficient services. But a big city that gets the ordinary things right can be an extraordinary place to live. Indianapolis can be that city.

Even with our challenges, Indianapolis is strong and vibrant. With an eye on the future, we are working now to make Indianapolis a community that is safe, prosperous, a destination for students and employers worldwide, and a sustainable landmark with strong neighborhoods and efficient local government.

(Pause)

Finally, it is an honor and a privilege to serve as your Mayor.

Allow me again to thank Christel DeHaan and all the supporters here today of Christel House Academy and our other Mayor-sponsored charter schools. You and your efforts are making a difference in our community.

I look forward to a year of challenges and opportunities as we work to make Indianapolis a safe, livable city that anyone can call home.

Thank you.